



COMEDIAN MARK KLEIN ENJOYS HORSE RACING AND IS ROOTING FOR HIS LATEST INVESTMENT, FILLY SNEAK A DRINK

# FUNNY 'SIDE'

BY ROBYN DAVIS SEKULA | CORRESPONDENT  
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Is horse racing funny? In Kentucky, it's a sure bet. Mark Klein, a comedian, corporate humorist and president and owner of his own small business, CorpJester Inc., is using his lifelong love of horse racing to fuel his particular brand of humor.

He performs for corporate meetings, on cruise ships and in other settings that need a little levity. As part of his comedy routine, he weaves in his experiences at the track and as a horse owner. Horse racing has a universal appeal, and audience members often want to know after a show if he really does own a horse. He's not kidding. He does indeed, as co-owner of No Joke Stables with Tom Cosdon of Louisville and about eight other partners. Filly Sneak A Drink is the stable's latest purchase. She has run in five races, placing

seventh and 11th in the last two. "She's smart and she's pretty," Klein said. "We don't know how fast she is yet. I fear she's too polite to get in front of the other horses. I believe she may be the best horse I've owned a piece of yet."

**In his blood**  
As a native Louisvillian, Klein said he's been visiting Churchill Downs since he was 16 years old. He bought his first Thoroughbred, Just Plain Lucky, in the early 1990s, and including Just Plain Lucky, he has owned five horses through syndicates made up of friends and associates. Out of the five he's owned, Oracat, a filly, has proved to have the most fodder for his comedy act. Oracat was purchased for \$25,000 in about 2003, and came in 11th out of a field of 12 in her first race. Klein is fond of telling his audiences about the filly, including those at Comedy Caravan on Bardstown Road, where he performs locally. "As all Kentuckians know, you do not get the fastest horse in the commonwealth for \$25,000," Klein said. "Of course, we did not. ... The horse she beat out of the gate apparently had laid down to foal

## MARK KLEIN

**Job:** Comedian, corporate humorist, president and owner of CorpJester Inc.

**Started company:** 1997

**Education:** Bachelor of arts degree in English from Colgate University, Hamilton, N.Y., 1976

**Age:** 53  
**Residence:** Lexington Road area

**Wife:** Jacqueline Klein, partner and broker at Parker & Klein Real Estate LLC, a residential real estate firm

**Son:** Max, 12  
**Web site:** www.corpjester.com  
**Phone:** (800) 419-0828

**His horses:** Sneak A Drink, Circuit Tap

when they threw the gates open." Klein jokes that Oracat was passed by two Amish couples and a glacier during the last part of the race.

### A life at the track

Klein likes to bet on the horses, but he tries not to make the kind of bets that "change lifestyles." He doesn't usually win enough to make him independently wealthy, nor does he lose enough to put him in the doghouse with his wife, Jacqueline Klein, a partner and broker with Parker & Klein Real Estate LLC, a residential real estate firm.

But he's made some bets that have paid off. One occurred at Laurel Park racetrack in Laurel, Md., on a cold spring day in which maiden fillies were running in their first race, a claiming race on a muddy track.

The race was hard to judge, Klein explained, because the wet track slowed

the horses and because maiden fillies often are tough to predict.

He won a lot of money at the track that day. In fact, it was his largest win ever. Klein wouldn't divulge just how much, but "I called a security guard to walk me to my car."

On another occasion, he and several friends picked five of the six winners in a pick six wager, which would have won them collectively \$500,000 if they had correctly chosen all six. The winnings were substantial, however. Klein said he poured his winnings right back into more bets the next day, and "crapped out by the third race."

As far as being an owner goes, Klein is pragmatic. Sneak A Drink is a particularly pretty chestnut horse and pleasant to own. But, he said, "when it comes down to it, it's an economic proposition not a pet."

But that being said, it's more of a

hobby than a business. Through a syndicate, he owned a horse named Tender Memories that his group sold for more than it had paid. But most of the time, the syndicate breaks even or loses a little money on horse transactions.

That's about par for the course, said Doug Powers, creative director, PriceWeber Marketing Communications Inc., an advertising and marketing agency. PriceWeber has hired Klein several times to perform comedy for clients, and his humor is always a hit, Powers said.

He thinks Klein gets great material from the track, if nothing else.

Those who own horses do so because they "love the sport, and love the animal, and (anticipate) the chance that it could be your syndicate in the Breeders' Cup," Powers said. "It's highly unlikely, but that's what it's all about, right? You'd have to maintain a good sense of humor to do what he does." |

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